

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

The antibiotic reuterin is obtained by cultivating strains of Lactobacillus reuteri under controlled conditions. Reuterin has inhibitory activity against Gram positive and Gram negative bacteria, against the yeast, Saccharomyces cerevisiae, and against the protozoan, Trypanosoma cruzi. Reuterin-producing strains are identified by growth inhibition of susceptible microorganisms in the presence of glycerol or glyceraldehyde. Lactobacillus reuteri strains may be used for reducing the number of non-Lactobacillus reuteri bacteria in food items and in the gastrointestinal tracts of animals.

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